



Indigenous Leader Invites Youth to Share Their Gifts

Xiye Bastida, Re-Earth Initiative, Fridays for Future NYC, New York

☀ Call to Action

Learn more about Re-Earth Initiative: www.reearthin.org

☀ Values

- Solidarity
- Leadership
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Environmentalism

☀ Lessons Learned

We must look to our ancestors to learn how to respect and take care of our home: the Earth.

Balance is the key to a sustainable future. Strive for balance in your life. Teach the importance of a balanced life to those around you.

Just as the darkness of the world can't extinguish the light of one candle, the wall of silence of our institutions can't silence a group of voices fighting for change. Be vocal. Speak up. Keep going! You will be heard.

Climate change issues are human rights issues.

In 2015, Xiye Bastida's hometown of San Pedro Tultepec in Mexico was hit with massive floods after a prolonged period of drought.

"At the time, I didn't understand climate change and its role in these increasingly volatile weather emergencies. I never even considered that there were people and businesses who didn't care about Mother Earth the same way my family and I do." But what happened in her hometown made Xiye realize that the climate crisis was here, and was affecting frontline communities. She set her sights on fighting climate change on behalf of the most vulnerable among us. In March of 2019, she rallied 300,000 students to strike for climate with Fridays For Future NYC. She has gone on to work with TED, the People's Climate Movement, Re-Earth Initiative, and other organizations that are helping to mitigate the climate crisis.

☀ Language Arts

Watch [Xiye's Ted Talk](#)¹. Write your own letter to a family member of your choice, in which you express and explain your position on climate change, which issues are the most pressing, and how and why you plan to "leave everything better than you found it."

What are [human rights](#)? How do human rights and climate change intersect? Working in groups of 3-5 people, create a presentation (15-20 slides) in which you analyze how the environmental destruction being caused by climate change is violating human rights. Be sure to mention which rights are being violated, and which specific climate change issue is causing the violation.

Make a list of 4-6 unconventional abilities or skills that you think can be useful in the fight against climate change. Create a series of TikTok videos in which you explain how each of these

abilities can be put to work in service of the planet. Create one video for each skill.

Xiye's organization, ReEarth Initiative, participated in the Escazu agreement. Create a video explaining what this agreement is, why it is so important, and how people can get involved in supporting it.

STEM Activities

Xiye's hometown in Mexico experienced drought and flooding, one of the side effects of climate change. Select one type of extreme weather (flooding, hurricanes, wildfire, frost, heat waves, etc.) and research how climate change can affect the intensity or frequency of these events. How would it affect different parts of society (health, agriculture, infrastructure, etc.) and how would it affect natural ecosystems? What are some ways to reduce/mitigate these effects?

Seeing the effects of climate change in her own hometown inspired Xiye to join the fight against climate change. Use online tools and resources to research and track the changes in temperature and weather patterns over time in your community. Does the data reveal the effects of climate change in your area? If so, what are some things that your community can do to mitigate these effects? How could these figures be improved?

Young people around the world are realizing that climate change is not a future event; it is happening now. And they are leading the fight against climate change. Many of them have been inspired through personal experience and education to take on this challenge. In this [module](#)³, students are introduced to the science of climate change, and can explore the various impacts it is having in the world right now. Students are then challenged to think of ways to join the fight, through raising public awareness via social media, staging protests in their community, writing letters to politicians and/or companies, etc.

Sustainability Innovations

One of Xiye's greatest accomplishments is her participation in the Re-Earth Initiative. Re-Earth began in 2020 after Earth Day in response to global digital protests and the motivation of youth. Learn how you can get involved with the [Re-Earth Initiative](#)⁴.

In addition to Fridays for Future, it is important for motivated young people to transform their drive for sustainability into careers. This article addresses [Digital Sustainability and Entrepreneurship](#)⁵ and explains how digital innovations can help tackle the climate change battle.

One of the main issues youth are facing is their lack of knowledge in how to participate in sustainable movements and innovations. However, online platforms are developing ways to educate students on these topics. Coursera is currently offering a five-week course on [Sustainable Digital Innovation](#)⁶, highlighting the business opportunities and strategies that the future offers.

Sustainability Career Pathways

Indigenous Studies Scholar. So much knowledge--of the land, of a sustainable way of life, of living through a world-changing [societal crisis](#)⁷ --exists in the experience of Indigenous peoples. Learning from and sharing this knowledge could be a powerful and valuable career path. If this is a path for you (as it is for Xiye's parents), you can start your explorations of this career at the [Native American and Indigenous Studies Association](#)⁸, or at the [Center for World Indigenous Studies](#)⁹.

Social Entrepreneur. Like so many of the other young people featured in this book, Xiye identified a societal challenge and created

an organization to help solve it. A social entrepreneur is much like a business entrepreneur, but creates something to solve a societal problem, through a nonprofit organization, business, or other initiative. Interested in becoming a social entrepreneur? [Start here](#)¹⁰.

Nonprofit Manager. Sometimes it's better to not start a new organization, but rather to plug into an effective existing organization. But few in the field have any formal management training, which is an ongoing problem in this sector. There are programs to train managers for nonprofit organizations specifically. While many of these are masters' levels programs (such as these [leading programs](#)¹¹), there are informal and undergraduate opportunities to learn essential management skills as well. And if you're really serious about this path, here's a 500+ page [introduction to the field](#)¹².

1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWkIgCnUWvY>

2 <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

3 <https://ourclimateourfuture.org/videos/>

4 <https://care.org/our-work/where-we-work/philippines/>

5 <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1042258719899425>

6 <https://www.coursera.org/learn/sustainable-digital-innovation>

7 http://earthed.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/SOW17_chap4_IndigenousEd.pdf

8 <https://www.naisa.org/>

9 <https://www.cwis.org/>

10 becoming a social entrepreneur? Start here

11 <https://www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-public-affairs-schools/nonprofit-management-rankings>

12 <https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1119585457/stansociinn09-20>

